AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) [[A]] An apparatus for updating a hierarchical classification dictionary, the updating apparatus comprising:

a processor;

an update proposal receiving unit that receives a proposal for updating a hierarchical classification dictionary, the hierarchical classification dictionary having which has a hierarchical structure including which includes a class that defines the hierarchical structure, the class including a property defining that defines a hierarchical class structure[[,]] and an attribute that is a detailed information field of the class and the property, wherein the hierarchical classification dictionary includes and in which a sub classification classes that inherit properties from class inherits a property of an upper classification classes class;

a proposal history storing unit that stores [[the]] past received proposals to update the hierarchical classification dictionary proposal;

an approximate proposal extracting unit that extracts one of the past received proposal proposals stored by the proposal history storing unit that approximates approximate to the a latest received proposal, the extracted proposal being extracted by searching the past received proposals using a search technique to determine that the extracted proposal approximates the latest received proposal, wherein the search technique used to extract the past received proposal differs based on whether the latest

<u>received proposal is a proposal to edit the hierarchical classification dictionary or a</u>

<u>proposal to add to the hierarchical classification dictionary</u>; and

an approximate proposal presenting unit that presents the extracted proposal.

2. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the proposal presented by the approximate proposal presenting unit contains a content of the proposal received by the update proposal receiving unit, a result of evaluation indicating one of rejection and acceptance of the proposal received by the update proposal receiving unit, a content of a comment on the proposal received by the update proposal receiving unit, and information on a degree of approximation that is a result of calculation of the degree of approximation.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when the received proposal is a proposal for adding one of a new class and a new property, the approximate proposal extracting unit searches the proposal history storing unit for a <u>past received</u> proposal ~~with a highest value of accumulated degree of approximation~~ based on respective attributes of the proposal for adding, to extract [[a]] <u>the</u> proposal <u>that most closely approximates</u> ~~approximate to~~ the proposal for adding.

5. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when the received proposal is ~~a proposal~~ for adding a new class, the approximate proposal extracting unit searches the proposal history storing unit for a proposal with a highest degree of similarity to a collection of properties of the proposal for adding, to extract [[a]] the proposal that approximates ~~approximate to~~ the proposal for adding.

6. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising an addition target searching unit that is configured to, when the received proposal is a proposal for adding one of a new class and a new property, advise of an addition target where the proposal for adding is to be added, according to a location of the proposal extracted by the approximate proposal extracting unit.

7. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 6, wherein when the received proposal is a proposal for adding a new class, the addition target searching unit advises of the addition target according to a hierarchical structure of the proposal found as a result of search based on a part or a whole of properties of the proposal for adding.

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 6, wherein when the received proposal is a proposal for adding a new class, the addition target searching unit advises of the addition target according to

a result of comparison between a property of the proposal found as a result of search based on a content of an attribute of the proposal for adding, and a property of the proposal for adding.

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 6, wherein when the received proposal is a proposal for adding a new property, the addition target searching unit advises that a class that defines the proposal approximate to the received proposal is presented as the addition target.

10. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a proposal advice presenting unit that is configured to advise of a result of evaluation indicating rejection of the received proposal, when the proposal extracted by the approximate proposal extracting unit is identical with the received proposal.

11. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a proposal advice presenting unit that is configured to advise of a result of evaluation of the proposal extracted by the approximate proposal extracting unit as a result of evaluation of the received proposal.

12. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising an evaluating and commenting unit that makes

a dictionary manager evaluate and ~~give~~ comment on the received proposal according to the result of evaluation given as advice.

13. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising an evaluating and commenting unit that makes a dictionary manager evaluate and ~~give~~ comment on the received proposal according to the result of evaluation given as advice.

14. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a history statistics analyzing unit that generates statistics and analyzes a history of the <u>past received</u> proposals stored in the proposal history storing unit; and

a reuse proposal presenting unit that extracts a <u>past received</u> proposal to reuse from the proposal history storing unit according to the statistics and the analysis of the history, notifies a proposer of the reuse, and presents the proposal to reuse.

15. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising a degree-of-attention presenting unit that presents a class, a property, and an attribute with a high degree of attention based on the statistics and the analysis of the history.

16. (Currently Amended) The ~~classification dictionary updating~~ apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a proposal draft receiving unit that receives a proposal that approximates approximate to a proposal draft;

a simulative approximate proposal extracting unit that makes the proposal extracting unit search for the proposal received by the proposal draft receiving unit; and

a simulative approximate proposal presenting unit that presents the proposal extracted by the simulative approximate proposal extracting unit.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method of updating a classification dictionary executed by an apparatus for updating a hierarchical classification dictionary comprising a processor, the method comprising:

receiving a proposal for updating a hierarchical classification dictionary, the hierarchical classification dictionary having which has a hierarchical structure including which includes a class that defines the hierarchical structure, the class including a property defining that defines a hierarchical class structure[[,]] and an attribute that is a detailed information field of the class and the property, wherein the hierarchical classification dictionary includes and in which a sub classification classes that inherit properties from class inherits a property of an upper classification classes class;

storing [[the]] past received proposals to update the hierarchical classification dictionary proposal;

extracting one of the past received proposals that approximates a latest a proposal approximate to the received proposal, the extracted proposal being extracted

by searching the past received proposals using a search technique to determine that the extracted proposal approximates the latest received proposal, wherein the search technique used to extract the past received proposal differs based on whether the latest received proposal is a proposal to edit the hierarchical classification dictionary or a proposal to add to the hierarchical classification dictionary ~~from the proposals already stored~~; and

presenting the extracted proposal.